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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Deepening of Estonian Straits of Hari Kurk and
Viire Kurk/Naval Exercises in the Bay of Kässare

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1. The underwater channels in the straits between the islands of Hiiumaa and Vormsi (Hari Kurk [sic]) and the island of Muhu and Virtsu on the mainland (Viire Kurk [sic]) were deepened to nine meters during 1949-1953. In the summer and autumn of 1953 cruisers of the types 'Kirov' and 'Sverdlov' repeatedly passed through these straits.
2. Kässare Bay [sic] between the islands of Hiiumaa and Saaremaa [sic] is a closed water during the navigable months. It serves as a naval training [sic] ground. In the navigation period mainly two kinds of training are conducted in this bay:
 - (a) The torpedo cutters of the Baltic Fleet conduct their practical exercises in torpedo shooting.
 - (b) The armored cutters of the Baltic Fleet practice artillery firing and landing exercises.
3. During these exercises the divisions of torpedo cutters and armored cutters are based on the naval harbor of Rohuküla [sic] where they obtain fuel, ammunition and other supplies.

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